



State of Connecticut
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Commission on Children



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Newsletter on School Readiness Legislation

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HUSKY Health

By Judith Solomon, Executive Director, Children's Health Council

Children can have several different kinds of health insurance. Some children are covered under their parent's insurance. This is often called commercial insurance and is usually sponsored by the parent's employer. But an estimated 90,000 Connecticut children have no health insurance.

Health insurance is now available for all children in Connecticut through the new Healthcare for Uninsured Kids and Youth (HUSKY). Connecticut's HUSKY Plan makes health insurance available to thousands of children and youth under the age of nineteen. HUSKY has two parts. Part A coverage is for children in families with incomes below 185% of the federal poverty level (\$25,253 for a family of three). Part A coverage is free; there are no premiums or copays for any health services. Part B coverage is for uninsured children in families with incomes above the level for Part A. There are co-pays for some services under Part B. Families with incomes above 235% of the federal poverty level (\$32,078 for a family of three) but below 300% (\$40,950) pay a premium of \$30 per child per month with a \$50 family maximum. Coverage can also be purchased at the state group rate for uninsured children in families with incomes above 300% of the federal poverty level.

Children with HUSKY coverage and many children with commercial insurance are enrolled in managed care plans, often called HMOs. Children in managed care receive their health care coverage from providers that are part of the managed care plan's network of providers. In most managed care plans, children have a primary care provider (PCP) who can be a physician, nurse

practitioner, or physician's assistant. The PCP is responsible for coordinating the health care that the child needs, and is available by telephone 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Because each child has a PCP, families can call the PCP when a child is sick and avoid going to the emergency room unless it is a true emergency. The toll free number for HUSKY information is 1-877-CT-HUSKY.

Managed care plans have member services departments to assist members in receiving health care. In addition, the Children's Health Infoline has been set up to help families with questions or problems in getting health care coverage or health services for their children. The Children's Health Infoline number is 1-800-434-7869.

The HUSKY health plan and the School Readiness programs are now interwoven. Child care providers receiving funding under the Child Care Development Block Grant and Head Start can be approved to grant immediate Medicaid eligibility to children. As a child care provider you can guide eligible families to health insurance coverage and the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment Program (EPSDT) or wellness health screenings. This presents a wonderful opportunity for some child care providers to be the direct link to health care access for children. For training in health care referrals call Laura Mullen at the Connecticut Children's Health Project (860) 550-6744.

WHAT IS EPSDT?

EPSDT is the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment program. EPSDT is also known as Health Track in Connecticut. Every person up to age 21 who is eligible for Medicaid is entitled to receive a complete set of health services under the EPSDT program.

These include:

- A complete physical exam (unclothed)
- Eye and hearing tests
- Lab tests, including lead levels, if needed
- Immunizations, if needed
- Dental assessment (How are your child's teeth, mouth and gums?)
- Health education about issues of concern for you and your child
- Nutrition assessment
 - (Is your child eating the right foods?)
- Developmental assessment
(How is your child growing?)

For information about EPSDT call infoline 1-800-434-7869

President Clinton and the First Lady Visit Connecticut

First Lady Hillary Clinton visited Connecticut on January 28, 1998, to recognize the work our state has accomplished in preschool. She led a forum with 1000 attendees on early childhood at Trinity College. Participants included Head Start creator, Yale Professor Ed Zigler; school superintendent Eddie Davis; parent leader Lisa Edmonds; health scholar Angela Crowley; recipient of the Outstanding Child Care Teacher Award Pamela Ryder; bank CEO David E.A. Carson; and Commissioner Joyce Thomas. Elaine Zimmerman of the Commission on Children moderated the ninety minute discussion.

The First Lady commented on our career ladder, parent leadership, focus on quality, and linkage between health and childcare. She praised the state of Connecticut for setting an example for the nation of comprehensive policy change in the interest of young children. More than 100 reporters covered the day-long events, with many states calling in to review our school readiness legislation.

On March 10, the President visited Housatonic Community College in Bridgeport Connecticut. Speaking at the on-site child care facility which receives dollars from the School Readiness legislation, the President honored Connecticut's legislative leadership for moving this policy forward and commended us for putting dollars into both early childhood prevention and quality. President Clinton also lauded Connecticut for our safety checks on crime, stressing that he will do the same in his initiative. The President honored parent and student, Pamela A. Price, for her leadership skills and selection of quality care for her five-year-old in order to work and study.

School Readiness Councils – One Year of Challenge and Growth!

By George A. Coleman, Bureau Chief, Department of Education Bureau of Early Childhood and Social Services

The state ended a fiscal year that fostered significant opportunities for preschool children and their families. The 14 Priority School Districts and 11 severe need sites have committed to developing more than 3000 new School Readiness slots that are coordinated with the child care needs of families. Many individuals and organizations have contributed to this success. In the 25 School Readiness grant towns, local School Readiness Councils (SRCs) are the heroes that must be applauded.

SRCs are invested in developing a neighborhood system that addresses the care and education needs of the town's preschool children. At a recent council meeting, I witnessed members engaging parents, providers, municipal officials, and school personnel about funding decisions, facility construction delays, program quality and transportation.

The average town's School Readiness council has spent more than 100 hours this year in meetings learning about – and seeking ways to improve – child care and education in their towns.

During the course of the year the local councils have taught state agencies a lot as well. We have learned that:

1. Volunteer efforts need paid support, especially when complex reporting and accountability requirements are expected.
2. Flexibility and coordination across state agency interests help SRCs in fostering comprehensiveness and shared vision at the local level.
3. Developmental supports and technical assistance for council members help them better lead and implement school readiness policy locally.

Among the challenges that continue to face councils are:

- Accessing local institutions and individuals that control community assets;
- Maintaining representation, including parent, municipal, business and local social service agencies;
- Establishing a close relationship between the early childhood community and the schools; and
- Developing and coordinating a local comprehensive school readiness infrastructure.

The state/local school readiness partnership depends on strong School Readiness Councils that are empowered to represent the needs of young children and their families to state and local policy makers. The state encourages the development of School Readiness Councils in all towns. They are the growing infrastructure for local children's policy in health, safety, and learning.

School Readiness Continues to Expand as the General Assembly Approves New Early Reading Success Grant Program

By Moira K. Lyons, Majority Leader of the State House of Representatives

Progress in School Readiness

Tremendous progress has been made in implementing the School Readiness legislation. Each School Readiness Council should be proud of what has been accomplished in so little time. The number of children served could nearly double in year two of this five year phase-in-plan. Additional towns with severe need schools are currently planning to organize local school readiness councils. More than 1,600 child care providers are being trained by a new Early Childhood Training and Resource Academy, coordinated with Connecticut's Charts-A-Course

career ladder for early childhood providers. Hundreds of child care centers are in the process of obtaining accreditation in all five regions of the state through our regional accreditation projects.

To help expand capacity of quality child care, the Connecticut Health and Education Facilities Authority (CHEFA) issued its first bonding this summer to provide financing for several new child care facilities. These are only some of your accomplishments over the past year.

Readiness Amendments Address Local Concerns

During the recently completed legislative session the General Assembly amended the School Readiness Act :

An education bill, Public Act 98-252 section 32, added the following provisions regarding administrative funding:

- Local School Readiness Councils will now be able to use up to five percent, but no more than \$50,000 of the School Readiness funding, for program evaluation and administration.
- They may also receive grants for start-up expenses.

In a Department of Social Services bill, Public Act 98-239, sections 30, 33, and 34, the School Readiness legislation was clarified in the following manner:

- A child care provider who has received financing through CHEFA and received a commitment for the debt service from DSS for expansion, does not have to apply annually for School Readiness funding;
- \$1.4 million of DSS School Readiness funding scheduled to lapse June 30, 1998 will not do so; and
- \$2 million was transferred back into the Early Childhood School Readiness account at the State Department of Education to fully fund year two of the five year School Readiness phase-in-plan.

Early Reading Success Legislation Builds Upon School Readiness

I am pleased to report that the General Assembly also adopted *An Act Concerning Early Reading Success, Public Act 98-243*. This bill seeks to address the 45% of our young children who are not reading at grade level by the fourth grade. The legislation creates a comprehensive early intervention literacy strategy targeting at-risk children in kindergarten through third grade. \$20 million was appropriated to provide: intensive reading programs; reduced class sizes; full day kindergarten; after school and summer school programs with literacy components; teacher training in literacy for current and new teachers; and student assessments. The goal is to reduce automatic social promotion, increase reading success early in a child's school experience, and to create a bridge between the early preschool years and the K-3 elementary school years.

This legislation also amends the School Readiness Act with the following provisions:

- Communication between preschool and elementary school teachers is encouraged by requiring the transfer of information on children from preschool to kindergarten.
- Public libraries are eligible for School Readiness funding for community literacy programs including partnerships with early care and education sites, health clinics and parents. Programs such as "Born to Read" or "Reach Out and Read" are now eligible for School Readiness dollars to ensure pre-literacy skills as well as love of language and story within the family.
- Schools are required to collaborate with local SRCs on after school and summer school programs.

The Early Reading Success legislation is a logical follow up to last year's School Readiness legislation. Both focus on early child development. A child who has had a quality School Readiness experience and who loves reading has a passport to a successful life.

The Early Childhood Training and Resource Academy: One Answer to the Enhancement Plans for Every School Readiness Council

The Early Childhood Training and Resource Academy operates in localities throughout the state providing quality training for child care providers. Launched by Lt. Gov. Jodi Rell and Social Service Commissioner Joyce Thomas, the academy is offering training for 1600 child care providers. This first state-wide training program has teamed up with twenty-one organizations, including community colleges, education service centers, and community organizations. The program offers the first fifteen hours of Connecticut Charts-A-Course curriculum as a first step toward professional development for home and center based providers. The academy pledged \$3.5 million to boost the professional preparation of our child care providers.

Quality training leads to quality child care.

Cognitive development and learning starts at the moment of birth. As the majority of young children are with caregivers for some hours each day while their parents work, the training of child care providers is imperative to promote their healthy development. National studies have documented that quality training for child care providers leads to improved child care linked to health care with stable attachment to a responsive adult in a physically and emotionally stimulating environment.

The Children's Fund of Connecticut spearheaded the startup of the Academy, joining with the State Departments of Social Services and Education, the Connecticut Commission on Children, the University of Connecticut, Wheeler Clinic and Connecticut Charts-A-Course. The objective is to have a direct impact on the health of children by supporting the training and education of professionals and paraprofessionals who provide care for our children.

The challenge to provide quality child care is rapidly increasing. In just 20 years, the percentage of children in child care jumped from 30% (1970) to 70% (1993). By the year 2000, 75 percent of women with children under five will be in the workforce and will be in need of child care.

The training program now underway was made possible by public training dollars awarded by the state legislature to support the School Readiness legislation and private sector contributions from Connecticut Children's Medical Center, Hartford and St. Francis Hospitals, as well as corporations such as Aetna, CIGNA, The Hartford, The Phoenix, Mass Mutual, Travelers and UTC.

For more information contact Mary Hess at (860) 793-3847.

Creating Readers

By Louise Blalock
Chief Librarian, Hartford Public Library

Reading readiness begins with the parents and begins at birth.

The provisions of the landmark School Readiness legislation and this year's legislation for early reading success bridge the preschool and early elementary years. Provisions suggest that children's librarians, as representatives of the town's public library, serve on each School Readiness Council.

The legislation calls for the establishment of school and public library partnerships to improve pre-reading and reading skills. Connecticut can benefit from the leadership and skill of public and school librarians to help children both grasp phonics and acquire the ability to decode words, as well as to understand and enjoy what is read. It is our challenge to endow children with the self worth that comes from the ability to find meaning in words.

Public and School Library Partnerships

In Hartford, we at the public library are part of the School Readiness Council. The Hartford Public Library, with a quality enhancement grant from the School Readiness Council, created a family literacy initiative that includes **Story Bag, Family Place, Creating Readers, and Head to the Library.**

Story Bag - Librarians provide technical assistance and training through visits to participating child care centers and home daycare providers monthly. Children's librarians tell stories, and bring collections of books. Providers are given lists of books, fingerplays, and activities that they can use with the young children in their care.

Creating Readers - The librarians work with parents to create a learning environment in the home for the children and the family. The library loans "kits" for parents to use with children and encourages parents to use library resources.

Family Place - Children and their parents/caregivers have a special place in libraries where they can come together to meet others and participate in constructive and cooperative fun learning activities. Staff help children and parents use library resources.

Head to the Library - Children in Head Start, both three and four year olds, receive their own library cards and learn about choosing a book and borrowing it for themselves. The program focuses on the value to children and families of borrowing books, reading aloud, and visiting their neighborhood library on a regular basis. Just before school starts, every Head Start child entering kindergarten gets a Head to the Library book bag, complete with supplies needed for starting school and a new book of his/her own.

No one program stands alone. Each one has overlapping elements. The family literacy initiative is recognition of the need in our community, a new statement of services, and a powerful renewal of the library's commitment to children and to family literacy.

School Readiness Councils: A Sampler of Creative Initiatives *

In **Hartford**, the School Readiness Council provided staff development and program support through initiatives such as:

- A Child Care Assistant Training Program for entry level child care workers including supervised internship placement;
- A combined care staff and parent program working together on issues of governance, communication, and classroom parent participation.
- Program coaches providing on-site consultation on: zoning regulations, room arrangement, staff development and training, staff selection, and choosing materials and equipment.

New London gained additional classroom space by cooperating with the neighboring towns of Waterford and Groton, to provide child care services to some of New London's children.

Some cities have both pooled the resources of their providers and sought partnership programs with other organizations:

In **Bridgeport**, School Readiness providers share innovative programs including family literacy, staff development, health and nutrition, and community outreach. The network will also seek solutions to common problems, such as transportation. Through the Quality Enhancement Grant, workshops are available to **all child care providers in the community**. Topics include: developmentally appropriate art, block play, why and how, and storytelling.

Waterbury is producing a public relations video and a brochure describing programs and providing information. Joint computer training will ensure that all the centers purchase the same equipment and software and produce a systematic reporting system and data for the Waterbury Public Schools.

40 children in family day care receive preschool experience for three hours a day at public schools. The providers also participate in some of the schoolroom experiences.

The Waterbury Public Schools and The Naugatuck Valley Community Technical College have created a program in which children may enroll for two to three years.

In **Windham** parents may access centralized information on School Readiness slots in the city. Public pre-school and private non-profit day care are working together. A public pre-school teacher provides curriculum support and implementation in a private non-profit child care program

* Space precludes a full listing and details of initiatives. Call other SRCs for information if you hear of a plan that might work for your town.

We hope this newsletter serves as an open forum for sharing ideas among all our communities and invite every School Readiness Council to send us information about projects, plans or ideas that might benefit and inspire others.

Statewide Accreditation Facilitation Projects

The School Readiness Legislation provides for statewide Accreditation Facilitation Projects (AFP) as one important way of ensuring safety and quality in child care programs. AFP began in Hartford, prior to the School Readiness legislation, where 40% of licensed programs are now accredited. Hartford is now included in the North Central Region which has a total accreditation rate of 19%. These figures far exceed the national accreditation level of 6% for licensed centers.

With the new AFP's, we expect a continued growth of accreditation throughout Connecticut. The following five regional projects, supported by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), will provide local services:

- Southwest Region: Facilitator: Joann Stabler (203-332-5216)
- Northwest Region: Facilitator: Judy Simpson (1-800-852-4314 or 860-567-0863)
- North Central region: Facilitator: Beth Bye (860-257-1402)
- South Central Region: Facilitator soon to be appointed.
- Eastern Region: Facilitator soon to be appointed.

For information on the Accreditation Facilitation Projects and free workshops call the regional facilitator or Deb Flis, Accreditation Facilitation Director, CT Charts-A-Course, 860-257-1104.

Accreditation Facilitation Project- Statistical Summary by Region

(Most recent information available, July 1998)

Region:	North Central	South Central	Eastern	Northwest	Southwest	CT Totals
Licensed centers (DPH as of 7/98)	482	370	191	251	321	1615
<i>CT Accreditation Statistics as of 8/97:</i>						
NAEYC Accredited Programs	86	47	50	37	43	263
Programs in NAEYC self-study	88	83	65	52	81	369
<i>CT Accreditation Statistics as of 6/98:</i>						
NAEYC Accredited Programs	91	49	50	36	43	269
Programs in NAEYC self-study	102	96	71	72	99	440

Funding for School Readiness:

Keep A Five Year Vision of Growth and Service Integration

When the General Assembly adopted the School Readiness Act in 1997, they indicated that a five year or 20% phase-in funding plan would be followed. The funding for the first two years was included in the 1997-98 biennial budget. In the biennial budget for 1999-2001 plans include increasing funding by \$15.7 million in FY 1999-2000 and by \$33.38 million in FY 2000-2001. Each priority city would then receive a corresponding increase in School Readiness funding and additional funding would be available for more towns with severe need schools.

School Readiness Councils should plan now for this projected increase in state funding. While planning can commence, it is important to note that a decision on the projected increase in funding would not be appropriated until the end of the next legislative session in May or June of 1999.

SCHOOL READINESS FIVE YEAR PHASE IN (*) (**)

School Readiness	FY1997-98	FY1998-99	FY1999-2000	FY2000-01	FY2001-02
1. Dept. of Education Early Childhood Program	\$10,000,000	\$19,780,000	\$26,700,000	\$35,600,000	\$44,500,000
2. Dept. of Social Services Care "Wrap-Around"	8,780,000	17,560,000	26,340,000	35,120,000	43,880,000
3. DSS Funding for State Funded Child Care	8,760,000	12,420,000	12,420,000	12,420,000	12,420,000

Centers					
4. Supplemental Quality Enhancement Grants	2,000,000	2,000,000	2,000,000	2,000,000	2,000,000
5. Regional Accreditation Project	600,000	600,000	600,000	600,000	600,000
6. Provider Training	2,000,000	2,000,000	2,000,000	2,000,000	2,000,000
7. Provider Education	263,879	271,795	271,795	271,795	271,795
8. Provider Criminal Background Checks	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
9. Program Evaluation	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
TOTAL FUNDS APPROPRIATED:	\$32,603,879	\$54,831,795	\$70,531,795	\$88,211,795	\$105,871,795
Increase over FY98-99:			\$15,700,000	\$33,380,000	\$44,244,616
Total increase over 98-99: \$93,324,616					
Total expenditures for FY99-2002: \$264,500,000					
(*) For items 1-2, this is a five year phase in, at 20% per year. Only first two fiscal years have actually been appropriated.					
(**) For items 3-9, no budget increase is included.					

School Readiness Legislation: Parental Involvement

Public Act 97-259 requires full parental involvement. School Readiness Councils seeking to involve parents in preschool planning may want to consider the following:

Motivators leading parents to actively participate on behalf of their child(ren) include:

1. Knowing that their participation is part of something successful;
2. Knowing that they can make a difference in their lives and the lives of their children;
3. Feeling supported, respected and acknowledged for their time and efforts; and
4. Receiving hands-on training and guidance.

Maintaining involvement and empowerment within a group entails:

1. Acknowledging efforts and inspiring next steps;
2. Developing realistic and attainable expectations and goals;

3. Creating a space where parents feel safe, comfortable and valued; and
4. Creating a sense of ownership in the change process.

Structuring and building leadership in a program consists of:

1. Working with parents in a non-patronizing, inclusive environment;
2. Establishing a peer network among the group and with community contacts;
3. Scheduling a time for personal sharing and listening; and
4. Providing a network of mentors.

Ensuring involvement of parents on a local level includes:

1. De-mystifying the political process; and
2. Making friends.

"Given federal devolution and the declining quality of life for children in America, policy planners must enhance the central role of parents locally in addressing child and family concerns. Investing time and energy now in developing strong parent leaders can have a profound and enduring impact on the health and vitality of communities." -*Elaine Zimmerman*

For information on the Parent Leadership Training Institute in your region call the Commission on Children at (860) 240-0290.

School Readiness Checklist

This checklist factors in 1998 amendments and other new integrating legislation. You may wish to use it as a guide for planning your goals, reporting School Readiness status to mayors and other elected officials, or broadening public awareness and encouraging community support. Please download and customize to suit your needs.

Specific Questions in Planning:

I. Supply

A. Demographics and Need

How many children are three and four years old in our town?

How many have access and utilize preschool?

How many children need full-day child care and early education?

What kinds of care and early education are available?

How many children will need preschool resulting from welfare reform? What are the projections over a five-year span?

How many children might need care in nontraditional hours resulting from their parents' employment hours and projected work hours for former welfare recipients?

B. Space

Is there a need for new facilities to address supply?

Will we need to expand sites or build new facilities?

If we build new facilities, which programs might we colocate to facilitate full-day, year round services?

What other programs might join in a building to increase one-stop consumer utilization of services?

C. Transportation

How do parents travel to place their children in care while they work?

Is there adequate transportation to and from sites?

If we build, can we build on transportation lines?

II. Quality

A. Licensed Care

How many early care and education programs are NAEYC accredited?

How many programs perform under Head Start standards?

How will we address barriers to licensing?

How many licensed family child care providers are in our town (NAFCC or CDA)?

Do we need copies of the above-mentioned standards for review?

Are there programs in the process of accreditation?

How will we facilitate further accreditation of existing and new programs?

How will we link accredited programs with non-accredited programs to upgrade care and education?

How will we link centers with family child care providers to build a partnership, when possible?

B. Training

What kinds of training programs are available in our district to ensure quality standards within health, safety and learning for young children?

Will we utilize an Accreditation Project to facilitate our sites becoming NAEYC accredited for quality?

How will we coordinate our district's programs with Connecticut Charts-A-Course, the career ladder program for child care and early education providers? Do we need information on Connecticut Charts-A-Course?

How will we structure training to bring family and center-based providers together, when possible?

Do we seek training for our child care providers in health care referrals and presumptive eligibility now that state legislation links health and child care?

C. Informal Care

How many unlicensed providers do we project are in our region?

Do we plan to lift them up into formal care? If so, how will we do this?

III. Financing

How will we involve business in readiness partnerships?

Do we need information on business tax breaks in child care and other areas?

Do we need fiscal support for expansion of new buildings, add-ons or general improvements?

Will we access any of the bond or loan funds in the legislation?

Will we seek technical assistance in preparing for expansion?

IV. Service Integration

How will we coordinate with full-day kindergarten, summer school and after school, resulting from the 1998 Early Reading Success bill?

How will we combine the child care and early education programs in our district to expand hours, days, summer utilization and overall supply?

Have we planned a "wrap-around" system to build a quality full-day program for our three and four year olds?

Will a wrap-around program change standards, location and/or quality?

How will we link to health care, nutrition services, literacy and job training, as needed?

Will we coordinate pre-literacy training with the literacy training in K-3 classrooms resulting from the new Early Reading Success legislation?

V. Leadership & Coalitions

How will we involve parents in decision making?

Have we involved providers in the planning and expansion of the field in our district?

Can business partner with us to link economic development and child development with mutual outcome measures? Can business help us prepare for construction loans?

Are there health care providers, such as respected pediatricians, involved in the process?

How will we involve media in our efforts? What steps will we take to encourage them to write stories for us to reach parents and inform them of quality and access points?

How will we do outreach to inform families about the initiative?

Will we refer our parents to leadership training opportunities?

VI. Workforce Trends

How many parents will work night shift or early morning hours?

How many parents will need full-day and/or year-round child care?

How many parents will seek to utilize preschool, but will need evening meetings to engage in child development issues?

Are there businesses interested in opening sites, either at the workplace or through a voucher system to address their workforce needs?

VII. Universal

Have we designed a program across class and race lines?

Is there a sliding fee scale to facilitate the involvement of those who can pay some amount?

How will we balance the payment method to offer an integrated program?

VIII. Benchmarks

Have we designed local school readiness benchmarks to evaluate our plan?

What concrete stepping stones might we develop to mark incremental changes sought for children in our district?

Would we like copies of existing school readiness benchmarks to review?

This School Readiness Checklist was prepared by the Connecticut Commission on Children for local community planning.

CHEFA Launches Innovative Child Care Financing Program

To support the renovation and construction of new child care facilities, the Connecticut banking community and the Connecticut Health and Educational Facilities Authority (CHEFA) have created the Child Care Loan Fund, CCLF. This new financing program is part of the State's legislative response to the shortage of quality child care.

Program elements include: a tax-exempt bond pool requiring a direct payment of debt service by the Department of Social Services for state-assisted children; a \$20 million loan guarantee program supported by \$1.5 million in state funds and \$4.5 million in CHEFA reserves; and a direct loan program funded by \$750,000 in state funds and limited to loans for \$10,000 or less. Due to federal tax laws, the pooled tax exempt bond program is limited to non-profit child care providers.

Presentations on CHEFA's Child Care Facilities Loan Fund Program have been given to School Readiness Councils in Bristol, Danbury, Hartford, Middletown, Stamford, Waterbury and Windham; to the mayors of Danbury, Stamford and Waterbury, and to 150 family home child care providers.

To date, nine applications have been received, totaling approximately \$25 million for the first tax-exempt pooled bond issue. Numerous applications for the small revolving loan and the guaranteed loan programs are currently being processed.

For more information on the loans available, or to request a presentation on the loan program, please contact CHEFA at 800-750-1862.

Healthy Child Care America

Healthy Child Care Connecticut

The Healthy Child Care *America* Campaign is based on the principle that parents as well as child care and health care providers can together promote the health of young children. Linking health and child care providers makes good sense – for maximizing resources, developing comprehensive and coordinated services, and, most important, for nurturing children.

Healthy Child Care *Connecticut* brings national resources to Connecticut child care providers including the Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Healthy Child Care America, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the National Research Center in Health and Safety in Child Care. State level resources include the Department of Public Health and the Governor's Collaboration for Young Children. Action steps include HUSKY outreach, assistance in health care referrals within child care settings and the use of health education books for children in pediatric settings.

If you would like more information on Healthy Child Care Connecticut please contact Nancy Berger, Project Director and Co-Chair at the Department of Public Health (860 509-8073), Angela Crowley, Co-Consultant (203- 7372548), or Marijane Carey, Co-Consultant (203) 287-9853.